PRESIDENT: The question is that a sum not exceeding Rs. 7·21 lakhs be granted to the Government under Demand XI—Administration of Justice.

The motion was carried and the grant made.

Demand XII—Central Prison.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: Sir, I beg to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. ·86 lakh under Demand XII—Central Prison.

***Motion* 72.**

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

72. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 76,404 for the Central Prison by Rs 9,100.

I am really interested in the efficient maintenance of the Central Prison. I am also interested in the health of the convicts who are there. The convicts in the Trivandrum Central Prison are not altogether an unfortunate class of people, because they have in the first place a palatial building in one of the healthiest parts of the town. There is very fine breeze there, and what is very rare in Trivandrum, there is very good water, and the food given to them is also exceedingly good. I beg permission to say that it is even better than the food given to the convicts in other jails. Certainly I do not want to add to the lot of wretched beings who are already debtors in the books of both God and man. We need only spend what is absolutely necessary for them. I have to point out for the consideration of the Council that, in Detailed Account No. 17 A, the diet charges are put down as Rs. 35,000, hospital charges as Rs. 5,500, and the charges on account of uniform and equipment as Rs. 2,500. When we take into consideration the fact that there are about 400 people in the jail, the figure under diet charges works out at more than Rs. 8 per head per month. That is more than the pay of a peon who has got to maintain his wife and children. Hospital charges amounting to Rs. 5,000 for 400 people are also excessive, while the most excessive item is uniform and equipment. I made a calculation this morning, and I speak subject to correction. I find that when the price of uniform for the Police and the Excise is only Rs. 8 per head and when the total amount for the foresters is only Rs. 475, the price of uniform supplied to the warders and others comes to about Rs. 25 per head. There are about 100 warders in the Central Prison. I do not know if I have left out any other figure. I think this matter may looked into. There is one principle which may be kept in view in dealing with jail administration. People are sent to the jail not because they are exceedingly well-behaved, but because they have committed offences against laws and because they want sequestration of a drastic kind. The poor in Travancore, as pointed out sometime ago, are suffering very much from want of food and from all other circumstances that make life miserable. I would refer in this connection to a sentence from the *Public Finance* of Bastable who, as you all know, is an eminent authorty. He says that, in the present penal system, criminals are supported in a way that secures them tolerable and healthy existence. Now, to deny to the pauper what is granted to the criminal, amounts to an inducement to crime. Therefore, Sir, I think I am really interested

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[Mr. G. Parameswaran Pillai.]

in the fate of these. Although I certainly advocate proper food being supplied to them, I am against any manner of luxuries being given to them. I am against the Darbar Physician going and attending each individual convict patient in the Central Prison. That will frustrate the object of the law. I am against any rich repast being given to them. When I say that the convicts may be given food of a coarse kind, I of course imply that they may be given just enough to eat. I think that there is room for retrenchment under this head.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: Sir, jail diet is prescribed by the Jail Rules. It is not possible to alter the diet until the rules are altered. I have been looking into the figures, and I find that the cost under diet in 1095 was Rs. 108 per head, while it was Rs. 189 in 1096. In 1097, so far, the cost has come to Rs. 80 per head and, for 1098, having regard to the contractor's rate, I think it would be possible to manage with Rs. 75 per head.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: May I know whether it is the *net* cost per head?

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: I am speaking about the dieting charges alone. The average strength of the jail is 425. Taking the cost at Rs. 75 per head, the total cost will be Rs. 32,000 in round number for 1098. I have no objection, therefore, to the allotment being cut down by Rs. 3,000. As regards clothing, it must be remembered that clothing is not purchased from outside, but is manufactured in the jail itself. I find that the allotment for 1097 was only Rs. 2,000, and that it had to be supplemented by another grant of Rs. 728. Thus the total grant for 1097 is Rs. 2,728. The actual expenditure in 1096 was only Rs. 2,250. Now that the price of clothing materials has gone down, it would be possible to manage with Rs. 2,000, *i. e.*, the amount originally sanctioned for 1097. Here also I would accept a cut of Rs. 500. As regards hospital charges, I do not think that it is possible to reduce the allotment, consistent with the health of the convicts. The actual expenditure for 1096 amounted to Rs. 5,363. The actual cost in 1098 would come to about Rs. 6,000. The cost of purchasing milk has to be added, as the dairy farm has been abolished now. In the interests of the health of the convicts it is absolutely necessary that the allotment should not be cut down.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: The cost per head of convicts in 1095 was Rs. 239-chs. 9-cash 7. In 1096 it was Rs. 228-chs. 5-cash 7. Can it be the *net* cost?

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: I spoke of the cost on account of dieting alone.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: I want only to make this observation. While appreciating the reduction that was accepted by the Chief Secretary, I would like to state that it should not in any way affect the interests of the convicts. I object to the statement of Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai that the Darbar Physician should not visit the jail. I say he ought to pay more frequent visits.

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MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: I must correct my friend, Mr. G. Paramesvaran Pillai. I said that the Darbar Physician should not go there at all times, whenever a man suffers and not that he need not go there at all. I want him to go there.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: I understand that, so far as the medical side is concerned, matters are not satisfactory. I have to deal with it later on when the Medical Department comes up for discussion. I submit for the information of the Government that it requires a very searching inquiry whether in one particular case a convict who has been sentenced—

PRESIDENT: I do not think that arises here. Your observation is not in order.

MR. G. PARAMESVAREN PILLAI: My only point is that on the strength of a certificate issued by an Assistant Surgeon a convict is said to have been released. To prevent such irregularities the Darbar Physician's visits should be more frequent.

PRESIDENT: It is not strictly relevant to the matter now in issue.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR: Sir, I support the motion of Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai. I am of opinion that further reduction can be made than what is proposed by the Chief Secretary. There are about 96 warders in the Central Prison. In British India and other places there is about 1 warder for 10 convicts.

MR. R. KRISHNA PILLAI: Sir, I rise to a point of order. The question of warders is not under discussion. It is the question of the reduction of Rs. 9,100 under diet and hospital charges, etc., that is under discussion.

PRESIDENT: I think he is in order. He is perhaps going to speak about uniform and equipment.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR: Here in the Central Prison there are only 425 convicts and for these men we have 96 warders, besides the Deputy Jailor, 5 Assistant Jailors, and so many others to supervise the work. I say, the number of warders can be reduced to at least 80. In that way, at least Rs. 2,300 can be saved.

Then, with regard to the Weaving Instructor, one is appointed on Rs. 60. I think we need not appoint a weaving instructor there on such a salary. An instructor from some other school may be asked to go and impart instruction to the convicts. In that way also, some saving can be effected.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Sir, I also support Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai's motion generally and I ask him to accept the reduction which Mr. Krishna Pillai has found it possible to make. I consider that the jail administration—

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[The President.]

PRESIDENT: If you advise him to accept that reduction, you should not make any further remarks. (*Laughter.*) The Jail Administration is not before us and I do not think that you can talk about it.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: If I simply lay down a dictum, Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai will be the last person to accept it without some arguments. (*Laughter.*) Therefore I submitted that the jail administration is a matter which requires careful looking into. For the past few years, it has been left in the hands of the Jailor.

PRESIDENT: You are not in order.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Sir, I am submitting that it is possible to make a reduction.

PRESIDENT: You are advising Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai to accept a cut?

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: As a tentative measure. And I submit that the administration of the jail requires careful looking into.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: Sir, my object is only to make the jail self-supporting, if possible. I remember to have heard one of the speeches of my revered Professor, Mr. K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar, in which he said that the Jeypore jail is self-supporting. I can act on his words, because he has seen that jail, and I remember what he said in that speech. Therefore, I think that our jail can also be made self-supporting. I do not want to deny those unfortunate convicts food; I do not want to deny them medical assistance; I do not want to deny them light and air, except when they are in cells.

Regarding Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai's suggestion, I am glad to inform the House that I shall accept it. There is another circumstance also which makes me accept that suggestion. I find the Chief Secretary on behalf of the Government taking a very conciliatory attitude. That is a very important circumstance. Therefore, I trust that the House will permit me to withdraw the motion.

PRESIDENT: The motion, as accepted by the Chief Secretary, will stand amended as follows:

72. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 76,404 for the Central Prison by Rs. 3,500.

The motion, as amended above, was carried.

***Motion* 73.**

The following motion was not made:

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR:

73. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 76,404 for the Central Prison by Rs. 3,000.

PRESIDENT: The question is that Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 86 lakh *minus* Rs. 3,500 under Demand XII—Central Prison.

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The motion was carried and the grant made.

The Council rose for lunch at 2 P. M. and met again at 2-50 P. M.

DEMAND XIII—POLICE.

MR. W. H. PITT: I move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 5·21 lakhs on account of Demand XIII—Police.

Motion 74.

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI: Sir, I move the following:

74. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 13,638 for the establishment of the Commissioner by Rs. 2,070 (provision for supernumeraries).

The very word 'supernumeraries' indicates that they are not necessary and therefore may be abolished.

MR. W. H. PITT: I would first explain to the House the effect of the recent reorganisation of the department on the office establishments. Many offices are to be closed. These include the offices of the District Superintendents of Police of Peermade and Nagercoil and many of the Inspectors' offices. As the result of these and other reductions 28 posts of clerks and 3 posts of mochies have been abolished. Now the clerks and mochies holding these appointments are in permanent pensionable service and we have to provide in the police budget for them, until they are either absorbed in vacancies or transferred to other departments. These 28 clerks and 3 mochies have been distributed as follows. 8 clerks and 1 mochi have been attached to my office—I mean, the Police Head-Quarter Office. 20 clerks and 2 mochies have been distributed among the offices of the District Superintendents of Police. It is to the 8 clerks and 1 mochi attached temporarily to my office that the mover refers. Reference will be made to the remainder later. All those clerks and mochies are, as I say, in permanent pensionable service and therefore it is not possible to discharge them, and provision has to be made in the budget for paying them. I need hardly say that no member of this House is more anxious than I am to hand them over to any other department, if possible. Their transfer would probably have been settled already but for the delay in all the departments caused by the sitting of the Legislative Council. I have no objection to doing without clerks and mochies whom, as the mover says, I do not require; but the fact is that they are still on my hands, and until provision is made for them elsewhere, they have to be paid from the Police funds.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Are we to understand that those places have been abolished, that these people have been retained as supernumeraries, and that as soon as they are absorbed the places will cease to exist?

MR. W. H. PITT: The appointments have been abolished.

MR. V. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI: They have been styled supernumerary.

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